

Yoga (02)

Definition of Yoga

Yogashchittavritti nirodhah

Yoga is the (*nirodhah*) silencing of (*chitta vritti*) the flux of mental (and emotional) activities. A silent mind enables us to live in the present, with a clear vision of the reality.

Why practice Yoga, the silencing of the mental (and emotional) activities?

Let us start with a bucket full of water. Stirring the surface generates ripples. The wavering surface blurs our vision. When still, that same surface will show us our own reflection.

Likewise our mind is constantly bogging between negative and positive thoughts. The silencing of the flux of mental and emotional activities empowers us to be focused (be present in real time) on the subject matter of our pursuit - study, work, etc.; oneness or union of the mind, body and soul with everything ... the self, nature, the creation and the Creator.

Thoughts come and go, mind is uncontrollable! ...Is it?

The analogy of the chariot and the charioteer in the Kathopanishad is a model for the working of the mind:

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु। बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान्। आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तृत्याहुर्मनीषिणः । ।

*Aatmaanam rathinam viddhi shareeram rathamevatu
Buddhim tu saarathim viddhi manah pragrahameva cha
Indriyani hayanyahur Vishayansteshu gocharan
Atmendriya manoyuktam Bhoktetyahur maneeshinah*

The chariot (*ratha*) is the body. The soul (*aatmaa*, traveller) commands the intellect, (*mana*, *saarathi*, charioteer) on the destination who is bound to follow the order and thus exercise full control of the mind (*buddhi*, reins), directing the organs of perception and actions (*jnānendriyan* & *karmendriyan*, horses).

The objects in this universe keep pulling the sense organs towards them. The body, the intellect, the mind, the sense organs are all inert things. They are activated only by the soul. Like the chariot which never moves by itself, the mind never strolls on its own. The soul decides the course of our life, and only a correct order will lead to the appropriate destination.

In the present-day world, the intellect (*mana*) would be similar to the software, the mind (*buddhi*) - the hardware, the soul (*aatmaa*) - the user who holds the PIN or Password.

(To be continued)

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